

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 NEA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 EB-11 COME-00

INT-08 SCEM-02 SCI-06 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /189 W

----- 050289

R 210935Z NOV 73

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8774

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUMMARY. THE HKG HAS ASKED THE OIL COMPANIES TO LIMIT OIL SALES TO SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT SUFFICIENT TO GET THEM TO THE NEXT STOP, A MEASURE TAKEN IN PART AS A RESULT OF TIGHTENING OF SUPPLY ELSEWHERE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. THE SUPPLY OF BUNKER AND AVIATION FUEL IS EEXPECTED TO REMAIN GENERALLY NORMAL IN HONG KONG FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAS ASKED OIL COMPANIES TO MAINTAIN ADEQUATE BUNKER STOCKS AND TO REGULATE SUPPLIES OF FUEL TO SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT. IN A LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE SIX MAJOR OIL COMPANIES OPERATING HERE, THE DEPUTY COLONIAL SECRETARY AND CHAIRMAN OF THE OIL POLICY COMMITTEE SAID THAT IT SEEMS "PROBABLE" THAT THERE WILL BE A REDUCTION IN THE
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AMOUNT OF OIL DELIVERED TO HONG KONG "DURING THE COMING

MONTHS", AND ASKED THAT THE AMOUNT OF OIL FOR SHIPS SHOULD NOW BE DETERMINED BY THE FUTURE SUPPLY SITUATION. IF REPLACEMENTS ARE NOT FORTHCOMING, DELIVERIES SHOULD BE REDUCED TO ENABLE THE SHIP ONLY TO REACH THE NEXT BUNKERING PORT. THE OIL COMPANIES HAVE BEEN ASKED TO REFRAIN, WHERE POSSIBLE, FROM PROVIDING HIGHER GRADES OF BUNKER OIL THAN IS NECESSARY FOR ANY SHIP. THE COMPANIES WERE ALSO REQUESTED TO LIMIT SUPPLY OF AVIATION FUEL TO THE AMOUNT REQUIRED TO COVER THE ROUTE, BUT WITH REGARD TO THE AVAILABILITY OF FUEL AT THE NEXT LANDING POINT; IN NO CASE, HOWEVER, WOULD SUPPLIES BE SO RESTRICTED AS TO ENDANGER THE SAFETY OF THE AIRCRAFT.

2. THIS GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION FOLLOWS REPORTS THAT SHIPPING COMPANIES AND AIRLINES, NOW RUNNING SHORT OF SUPPLY AT POINTS ELSEWHERE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, AND TRYING TO USE HONG KONG TO STOCK UP AS BEST THEY CAN. THE GOVERNMENT HAS REITERATED, HOWEVER, THAT STOCKS ARE STILL NORMAL, AND THE OIL COMPANIES ANTICIPATE NORMAL DELIVERIES DURING NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER.

3. THIS HAPPY EXPECTATION MAY BE DUE IN PART TO THE RELATIVELY FAVORABLE STATUS EXTENDED TO THE UK BY THE ARAB STATES. THE HKG IS ALSO AWARE, HOWEVER, THAT ALLOCATION OF CRUDE TO THE REFINERIES IN SINGAPORE AND ELSEWHERE, AND SUBSEQUENTLY OF REFINED PRODUCTS TO HONG KONG, IS ALSO AFFECTED BY ALLOCATION DECISIONS MADE AT HEADQUARTERS OF THE MAJOR OIL COMPANIES. AS A RESULT OF SUCH DECISIONS, U.S. OIL COMPANIES HERE, AS REPORTED PREVIOUSLY (HK 11443, 11248) HAD ALREADY BEGUN TO MONITOR CLOSELY THE SUPPLY OF FUEL SUPPLIED TO SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT.

4. U.S. CARRIERS HAVE INDICATED TO THE CONGEN THAT THEY ANTICIPATE NO SERIOUS PROBLEMS DURING THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. THE AVAILABILITY OF BUNKERING FOR THE U.S. NAVY IS BEING REPORTED ROUTINELY THROUGH FLEET CHANNELS.
OSBORN

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